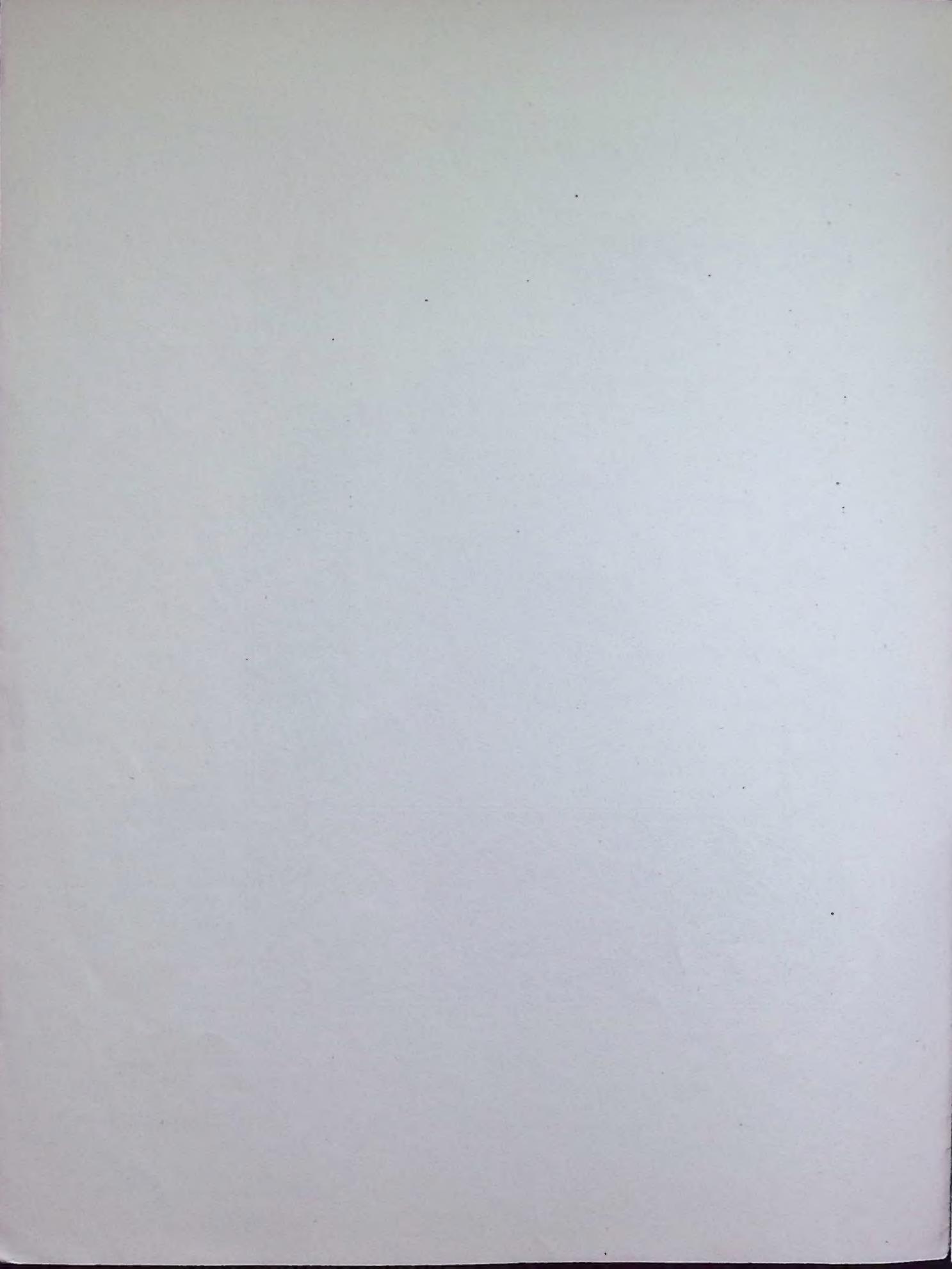


THE ENAMELING OF
FURNITURE—
Its Decoration

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LESSON TEN



"He that hath a trade, hath an estate."
—Benjamin Franklin.

To the great possibilities of the art of enameling and decorating furniture is presumably due its rejuvenation throughout the art-educated circles of the world. Its history is remote—the Chinese found a lacquer which they used extensively and which had the appearance of enamel, for enamel was unknown to them. The beautiful examples found in the Celestial Empire of those days may have inspired the furniture designers of Europe as early as the beginning of the last century.

The art schools were few then, and the opportunity for an art education was denied to the great majority of them, so they had recourse to decalcomanias or transfer pictures. The results were rather crude and amusing and yet not bad at all.

They created all sorts of designs and schemes which were original without being ridiculous, and so a great revival swept the country-side. The great vogue was on, and lived and prospered and its popularity will not wane.

There are few homes of taste and refinement today that can not boast of a breakfast set or a few representative pieces of this art, whether garden chairs or delicate and cheerful bedroom furniture.

An enamel background makes a very tempting surface to decorate, and a well selected design will help the color scheme of any room.

Enameling makes it possible to rejuvenate discarded pieces of furniture as well as to beautify new ones—such as the unfinished furniture listed in our catalog.

They used a lacquer that in smoothness of finish rivaled the enamel of later years. Hepplewhite and Chippendale of England were so impressed with the newly discovered process of decoration that they did not hesitate to introduce it as a theme of furniture decoration.

This art of furniture decorating was a half-forgotten fashion, when through a search for new ideas, due to necessity perhaps, our mid-Victorian grandmothers revived an art which was to prove its popularity to the present day.

"No great deed is done by falterers who ask for certainty."—George Eliot.

An old chair or table may be made over into an attractive article through enameling and decorating. A dull corner may be relieved of its somber and uninviting appearance by a freshly painted chair or table. A dark room may be livened and made cheerful by the introduction of tastefully enameled furniture.

The right design must harmonize in color with its surroundings. Although it is permissible not to match the surroundings of the room in the local color of the furniture, itself, yet the color selected must be harmonious with those surroundings.

When the local color of the furniture has been selected, we will turn our attention to the selection of the proper design with which to decorate it. It must be modest in size and color; an unpretentious design will often produce the right touch of color. With this in view, I have designed small motifs which will be found invaluable in the matter of selecting a design.

Bands here and there around the posts will also help to echo the color of either the

main body of the chair or table or the motif selected. It will be well to study Lesson 2, (Colors) and to become familiar with primary colors and their complementaries. As a further help you will find below a list of colors, and their mixing to produce almost any shade you may desire:

Brown mixed with Pink makes a Reddish Brown.

Blue mixed with Pink makes Mauve.

Brown mixed with Red makes a Dark Reddish Brown.

Yellow mixed with Red makes Deep Orange.

Green mixed with Red makes Olive Green.

Blue mixed with Red makes Dark Wine Color.

Violet mixed with Blue makes Indigo Blue.

Green mixed with Blue makes Bottle Green.

Pink mixed with Blue makes Lavender.

Red mixed with Blue makes Dark Crimson.

Brown mixed with Green makes Olive.

Red mixed with Green makes Garnet.

Pink mixed with Yellow makes Orange.

Brown mixed with Yellow makes Old Gold.

Green mixed with Yellow makes Yellow Green.

Violet mixed with Yellow makes Seal Brown.

Blue mixed with Yellow makes Green.

Red mixed with Brown makes Maroon.

Pink mixed with Brown makes Terra Cotta.

Blue mixed with Brown makes Bronze.

Pink mixed with Violet makes Purple.

Red mixed with Violet makes Magenta.

Green mixed with Violet makes Foliage Green.

"It is doubting, and facing the wrong way, facing toward the black, depressing, hopeless outlook that kills effort and paralyzes ambition."—James Allen.

Nothing so reveals your character as the way in which you do your work, the spirit and quality you put into it.

A wretched job shows a low ideal in the craftsman. A finely wrought piece of work is an indication of superior mentality.

There are many color combinations to apply on furniture, and I will refer you to the plates in Lessons 10 and 12, on which I designed a few motifs to be used in connection with these combinations. You will find also in Lesson 12 a chart showing a number of harmonious color combinations to use.

You will enamel and outline Plate 1 of this lesson and submit it to me for criticism.

Decalcomanias or transfer pictures are

sometimes used with advantage in decorating enameled furniture and very effective designs may be procured.

Some of the most exclusive manufacturers of breakfast suites and high grade furniture use decalcomanias as a foundation. Touches of oil conforming in shade with the design are applied as finishing touches and prove very effective. I have seen decalcomanias treated in this manner so that they could hardly be detected from small oil paintings. The highlights especially were made brilliant by touches of Chinese White, or Light Yellow.

The application of the decalcomania, although very simple, requires a certain amount of care to be successful. The article on which it is to be applied must be

perfectly smooth. If it has been enameled recently care must be taken that it is perfectly dry.

It would be well to examine the decalcomania carefully before starting to work. You will observe that the side on which the transfer is printed is only a thin veneer of

tissue, known as "onion peel." This is, you will note, glued on to a back of stiff, yet absorbent paper. This can be peeled off readily. Before starting note the list of cautions following the directions.

You are now ready to follow the

Directions for Applying Decalcomania Transfers

First—Apply a very thin coat of varnish to the picture side of the transfer.

Second—Allow the transfer to stand till the varnish feels sticky at the touch of the fingers. (Always test the varnish along the edges in order not to disturb the design itself.)

Third—Place the design, picture side down, on the surface to receive it, and press it down firmly with the fingers.

Fourth—Peel off the heavy paper, thereby separating it from the thin paper on which the transfer is printed. Do this by starting at one of the corners of the decalcomania and rolling up that corner until all of the back is removed. If it does not come off readily dampen it slightly with a sponge

and after the stiff paper has absorbed the water it will peel off easily from the thin.

Fifth—Wet the back of the thin paper remaining on the surface till it is thoroughly saturated with water. Work from the center to the edges.

Sixth—Lift off the paper and wash the face of the transfer with a sponge and water.

Seventh—To remove the excess varnish around the design pat lightly with a rag saturated with turpentine or gasoline.

Eighth—Allow the transfer to stand 24 hours. The decalcomania will be ready then for the touching up with oil colors. After the oil colors have dried, give the surface a coat of varnish. Do not outline a decalcomania.

Have faith in yourself: "Faith is the torch that leads the way when other faculties cannot see."—James Allen.

Cautions

- 1.—In cold weather use luke-warm water.
- 2.—If you apply the transfer while the varnish is too wet the setting will take place after the paper has been removed thus causing the transfer to wrinkle.
- 3.—If you do not wash off the sticky gum that remains when the paper is removed, it will dry and crack the transfer.

- 4.—Read especially carefully the SECOND and SIXTH paragraphs.

In your kit you will find a decalcomania which I want you to transfer to a piece of practice board according to directions and return to me with the plate at the end of this lesson, which is to be traced and painted with enamels.

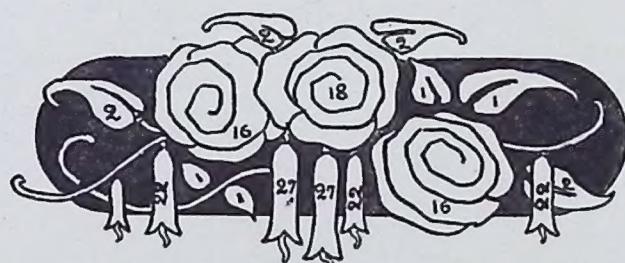
Here are a few suggestions to help you touch up the transfer with oil paint so as to give it the appearance of hand work. Apply the paint rather thickly so the brush marks will show. You will probably be able to use the oils just as they come from the tubes, but if it is necessary to thin them,

use a small amount of turpentine. Put light oil paint on the high lights (i. e., the lightest places) and dark oil paint on the shadows. Do not paint the entire transfer.

Note:—The enameling of furniture will be continued in Lesson XII.

Gabriel André Petit

MOTIF for SUMMER FURNITURE.



G.A.P



Lesson 10. Pl. I

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